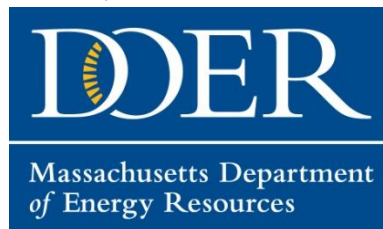


**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES (DOER)**

Dan Burgess, Acting Commissioner

RFQ-ENE-2015-015



REQUEST FOR QUOTE

**Mohawk Trail Renewable Heating Initiative
Forest Resource Assessment**

I. Procurement Calendar

DOER Issues RFQ	February 24, 2015
Deadline for Submitting Questions	March 10, 2015
DOER Answers Questions	March 12, 2015
RFQ Response Due	March 13, 2015 4:00PM
Selection of Winning Response*	March 20, 2015
Execution of Contract with DOER*	March 27, 2015
Project Kick-off meeting*	TBD

* Dates after RFQ Response Due date are *anticipated* dates. All dates are subject to change.

II. Procurement and Contact Information

A. Type of Procurement

Fee for Service subject to 801 CMR 21.

B. RFQ Distribution Method

This RFQ has been distributed electronically using the Commbuys system. It is the responsibility of every potential respondent to check Commbuys for any addenda or modifications to an RFQ to which they intend to respond. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and its subdivisions accept no liability and will provide no accommodations to respondents who fail to check for amended RFQs or submit inadequate or incorrect responses.

Respondents may not alter RFQ language or any RFQ component files. Those submitting a proposal must respond in accordance to the RFQ directions and complete only those sections that prompt a respondent for a response. Modifications to the body of this RFQ, specifications, terms and conditions, or which change the intent of this RFQ are prohibited. Any unauthorized alterations will disqualify a response.

C. PRF46 - Management Consultants, Program Coordinators and Planner Services

Work awarded as a result of this RFQ is pursuant to statewide contract PRF46 - Management Consultants, Program Coordinators and Planner Services. As such, all terms, conditions, contract rules, and pricing established in PRF46 shall apply.

D. Massachusetts Public Records Law

All proposals and information submitted in response to this RFQ are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L., Chapter 66, Section 10, and to Chapter 4, Section 7, Subsection 26. Any statements in submitted proposals that are inconsistent with these statutes shall be disregarded.

E. Small Business Procurement

This is a small procurement targeted to small businesses participating in the Commonwealth's Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP). DOER intends to evaluate bid responses from and to award a contract to a SBPP-participating business (es) who submit a bid that meets or exceeds the solicitation criteria only. If determined that there is inadequate SBPP capacity, or no SBPP-participating vendors provide a responsive bid, the Department will evaluate and award bid responses received from non-SBPP businesses. To determine eligibility and to participate in the SBPP, please review the requirements and general program information at www.mass.gov/sbpp.¹

G. No Guarantee of Resulting Contract

The Commonwealth makes no assurance that any services will be purchased from any contract resulting from this RFQ.

H. Questions and Answers

All questions must be submitted through the Q&A feature of this solicitation within Commbuys.

¹ This procurement is not limited to business participating in the SBPP. Proposals will be expected from qualified PRF46 vendors.

I. Contact Information

Responses to this RFQ will be received by:

Procurement Contact:	Robert Rizzo Department of Energy Resources 100 Cambridge Street, Suite 1020 Boston, MA 02114
Telephone:	617-626-7379
E-mail:	Robert.Rizzo@state.ma.us
RFQ Name:	Mohawk Trail Renewable Heating Initiative – Forest Resource Assessment
RFQ File Number:	RFQ-ENE-2015-015

III. Introduction & Background

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, in partnership with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) and the Franklin Land Trust (FLT) is exploring a way to turn one of western Massachusetts's strongest assets—its extensive privately-owned woodlands—into a nationally recognized economic resource. The FRCOG and BRPC, with the assistance of FLT, recently conducted a regional public outreach and planning process to determine the level of community and private landowner interest in a new partnership between 20 towns in northwestern Massachusetts and State and Federal agencies. The towns included in the study area are Ashfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Hawley, Heath, Leyden, Monroe, Rowe, and Shelburne in Franklin County, and Adams, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Florida, New Ashford, North Adams, Savoy, Williamstown, and Windsor in Berkshire County.

The proposed partnership with the State and U.S. Forest Service could lead to a new model for conservation and economic development that leaves land in private ownership. For interested communities, a regional natural resource conservation and economic development designation could provide State and/or Federal funds as well as technical assistance to expand and improve forestry activities on both privately-owned and State-owned land. In addition, this potential designation would focus on forest-based economic development, including recreational tourism, local sustainable forest products, and research on new forest-related manufacturing technologies.

Previous lack of timber harvesting standards have created an over abundant volume of low quality wood products that have no feasible markets, which in turn limits landowners' forest sustainability options. Utilizing this "business as usual" resource to provide renewable heating will provide income to landowners, increase forest vitality and sustainability, create harvesting, trucking and manufacturing jobs and reduce the financial burden on towns paying for expensive unregulated fossil fuels to heat their schools, town halls, libraries, senior centers, public safety buildings, DPW garages, etc.

The Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) will participate in this initiative by seeking to increase a rural economic development strategy that includes harnessing the regions abundant low quality wood products as useful thermal energy for publically owned buildings, private businesses and homes in the designation area.

Buildings in the designation area are typically heated with fuels such as heating oil or propane. DOER seeks to reduce consumption of fossil fuels for heating and will release a series of Requests for Proposals (RFR's) to quantify the available forest resource, regional economic impacts including job creation, reducing regional heating fuel costs, reducing carbon emissions, the development of a strategic plan to implement renewable heating in the region and develop a business plan for the manufacture and distribution of wood pellets.

Over the next several months, DOER will seek proposals for the following RFQ's for the Mohawk Trail Renewable Heat Initiative:

- Regional Resource Assessment;
- Quantify the Carbon Balance of the Regions Forests;
- Market Analysis and Development;
- Development of a Wood Pellet Manufacturing, Storage and Distribution Business Plan;
- Regional Economic Impact Study.

Please note that the RFQ's will be released sequentially.

IV. Scope of Work

DOER is soliciting Bidders for the acquisition of technical services to complete the Regional Resource Assessment. This will focus on the forest biomass resource available for renewable wood pellet manufacturing, distribution and heating in 20 towns in northwestern Massachusetts. DOER seeks to quantify currently available biomass resource, review sustainable removal recommendations from Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) CH. 61 designated forestlands, and assess regional capacity for economic development and wood pellet certification potential.

The towns included in the study area are Ashfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Hawley, Heath, Leyden, Monroe, Rowe, and Shelburne in Franklin County, and Adams, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Florida, New Ashford, North Adams, Savoy, Williamstown, and Windsor in Berkshire County.

At a minimum, the selected bidder will analyze the following sources of data to determine the quantity and composition of available forest based resource:

- USDA Forest Service Forest Inventory Assessment (FIA) data;
- DCR Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) for plots within the region;
- DCR CH. 61, 61A and Forest Stewardship Forest Management Plans; and
- DCR CH. 132 Forest Cutting Plans.

For each of the tasks outlined below, the selected bidder will provide a projection of the capacity of biomass that could sustainably be utilized in the region for wood pellet manufacturing, distribution and heating.

Task 1.

Provide a comprehensive analysis of the regional available resource from FIA, CFI, local knowledge, literature and previous experiences to document the resource of unutilized net growth of wood in the region, as well as an

inventory of unutilized net growth in adjoining towns, residues from primary and secondary forest product manufacturers in the region, land non-forest sourced residues such as clearing chips, utility line trimming and urban wood residues.

The following categories shall be included in the analysis:

- Land classifications in the region;
- Land clearing in the region;
- Forest residues available;
- Sawmill residues available;
- Urban wood residues available;
- Annual growth and removals.

Task 2.

Analyze approximately 700 currently active Chapter 61/Forest Stewardship Plan recommendations on file with DCR to project the supply of biomass for heat that could be available from implementing Chapter 61/Forest Stewardship harvests and expanding forests under those programs by a reasonable amount each year. Note that all CH. 61 Forest Management Plans are in digital format as an Excel database and available at two DCR District Offices in Amherst and Pittsfield, MA. Completion of this Task will require visit(s) to the two DCR District Offices to collect the digital information from the Plans. Paper copies of all plans are also available as needed. DOER will assist in the coordination between the selected bidder and DCR personnel.

Data shall be collected on the Management Practices prescribed by the Forester for each forest stand within the Plans. At a minimum, the electronic data to be collected shall include the Acres and Total Volume To Be Removed by board feet, tons, and cords, and shall be categorized by town. Collected data shall be reported in aggregate for each town within the region.

Task 3.

Compare harvesting and utilization versus potential using *DCR CH. 132 Forest Cutting Plans data and DCR CH. 61 and Forest Stewardship Forest Management Plans*. Note that all Forest Cutting Plans are in digital format as an Excel database and available at two DCR District Offices in Amherst and Pittsfield, MA. Completion of this Task will require visit(s) to the two DCR District Offices to collect the digital information from the Plans. Paper copies of all plans are also available as needed. DOER will assist in the coordination between the selected bidder and DCR personnel.

Include an analysis of the total acreage and volume of forest products harvested and a comparison of cord/MBF ratio for Short Term and Long Term Forest Cutting Plans for the past ten years. Data will be presented by Town and Year of harvest for both Long Term and Short Term Cutting Plans.

Task 4.

Based upon the findings from Task 2 and 3, provide an analysis of the total resource which is available now and on a sustainable basis into the future. Quantify and comment on that portion which will remain unavailable for various reasons (reserves, landowner attitudes, etc).

Based upon the above research, develop the following:

- supply curves;

- price sensitivity analysis;
- seasonal availability; and
- existing competitive market analysis.

Task 5.

Evaluate the geographic region and accessed supply potential for wood pellet manufacturing and distribution. Provide a projection of the capacity of wood pellet manufacturing that could feasibly be installed in the region and the suitability of the region to manufacture wood pellets including evaluating existing forest based infrastructure and workforce to provide required feedstock.

Task 6.

Prepare a technical report providing full documentation of the Regional Resource Assessment. Prepare a detailed PowerPoint presentation of the outcomes and deliverables associated with the tasks above, and participate in two regional meetings with stakeholders. One meeting will take place in each County. DOER will assist in meeting development and outreach.

V. DELIVERABLES

Key deliverables to be completed by the selected consultant include:

- Comprehensive analysis of the regional available resource;
- Technical report providing full documentation of the Regional Resource Assessment;
- PowerPoint presentation detailing outcomes and deliverables associated with the tasks above; and
- Participation in two regional meetings with stakeholders, with one meeting in each County.

VI. CONTRACT INFORMATION

A. Funding availability /duration of contract

The contract(s) awarded pursuant to this RFQ-ENE-2015-015 will have an initial duration of four months, with one renewal option for up to three additional months. The estimated value of purchase(s) resulting from this Bid is \$65,000.

The estimated value for this Bid was based on the following: The cost of similar studies done by other organizations, historic costs based on similar scopes for the Department, and the expedited schedule of such studies. DOER reserves the right to hire a consultant for a limited scope of work if necessary to meet the budget parameters.

B. Contract expansion

If additional funds become available during the contract duration period, DOER reserves the right to increase the maximum obligation to the contract executed as a result of this RFQ-ENE-2015-015, with

related additional tasks to be determined by mutual agreement consistent with the terms of statewide contract PRF46.

C. Consultant's responsibility and invoicing

The selected consultant will be responsible for timely completion of the requirements described above. The selected consultant must assume overall responsibility for coordinating and completing all deliverables contained in the resultant contract. All invoices must be submitted to DOER on a schedule and in a format to be agreed upon by DOER and the selected consultant. Invoices shall include sufficient back-up documentation to support the amount being invoiced.

D. The Commonwealth's responsibility

The Commonwealth's Project Manager will be responsible for overseeing and managing all tasks undertaken by the selected consultant, including but not limited to developing of a Statement of Work; reviewing, commenting and approving work plans and subsequent deliverables; coordinating with DOER and other program staff; approving invoices promptly; and reviewing and preparing work products for reports.

VII. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Respondents to this Quick Quotes RFQ-ENE-2015-015 must respond via Commbuys and must also submit an electronic proposal to Robert.Rizzo@state.ma.us by **4:00 P.M. on March 3, 2015**. Late proposals will not be accepted. Faxed proposals will not be accepted. Proposals should not be submitted in an elaborate format that includes expensive binders or graphics. Unnecessary attachments beyond those sufficient to present a complete, comprehensive, and effective response will not influence the evaluation of the proposal. Each page of the proposal should state the name of the bidder, and the page number.

Respondents must provide the following sections in their proposal.

1. A narrative, not to exceed ten (10) pages, including:
 - a. Description of proposed approach to meeting the tasks and objectives set forth in this RFQ
 - b. Overview of team qualifications, including the team's project management structure. Full team member resumes may be submitted as attachments and do not count toward the ten (10) page limit. Proposals that include any partnerships or sub-contracting relationships must designate one party as the lead consultant and identify the team of subcontractors (collectively referred to as consultants).
 - c. Examples of previous projects that demonstrate experience with similar energy management information systems, consulting for governmental entities, or other relevant experience.
 - d. (page limit does not include resumes, schedule of activities, or cost proposal).
2. A schedule of activities, including key milestones and outcomes for the proposed approach. The schedule shall define a clear timeline for achieving the project objectives and deliverables.

3. Respondents must provide an overall project pricing based on hourly rates for personnel assigned to the project. In no instance can any hourly rate exceed the maximum billing rates established in PRF46. Consultants must include any and all ancillary services in the project price. DOER under no circumstance will pay additional costs related to the project unless previously agreed to by both parties.

VIII. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

The selected consultant needs demonstrate the experience, ability, and skills to complete projects of this type on time and within budget.

All proposals received by the due date and meeting the requirements established in this RFQ will be reviewed and evaluated by DOER staff. The evaluation will include, but will not be limited to, the following criteria:

1) Completeness and clarity of the proposal:

Respondent presents a plan of approach to achieve end deliverables that is very logical, well thought through, takes into consideration all stakeholders, and fully addresses all elements stated in the RFQ.

2) Respondent's experience with similar projects:

Respondent has demonstrated experience working on projects of a similar type, including previous consulting work for government agencies and demonstrated background in resource management.

3) Price

Respondent presents a reasonable budget with expected hours of work broken down by major tasks and by personnel.